

Appl. No. : 09/980,559  
Filed : May 14, 2002

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently amended) A purified and isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes human hepatitis C virus of genotype 2a, said molecule capable of expressing said virus when transfected into cells and further capable of infectivity in vivo, wherein said molecule encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or encodes an amino acid sequence that differs from that of SEQ ID NO: 2 by  $\leq 2.2\%$   ~~$\leq 2\%$~~  at the amino acid level.
3. (Currently amended) The nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, wherein said molecule comprises the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or comprises a nucleic acid sequence that differs from that of SEQ ID NO: 1 from nucleotide 341 to 9439, which corresponds to the ORF, by  $\leq 4.1\%$   ~~$\leq 2\%$~~  at the nucleotide level.
4. (Previously presented) A DNA construct comprising a nucleic acid molecule according to claim 2 or 38.
5. (Previously presented) A DNA construct comprising a nucleic acid molecule according to claim 3 or 39.
6. (Original) An RNA transcript of the DNA construct of claim 4.
7. (Original) An RNA transcript of the DNA construct of claim 5.
8. (Original) A cell transfected with the DNA construct of claim 4.
9. (Original) A cell transfected with the DNA construct of claim 5.
10. (Original) A cell transfected with the RNA transcript of claim 6.
11. (Original) A cell transfected with the RNA transcript of claim 7.
- 12-36 (Canceled)
37. (Previously presented) A composition comprising a nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, 3, 38, or 39 suspended in a suitable amount of a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or excipient.
38. (Previously presented) The nucleic acid molecule of claim 2, wherein said molecule encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.
39. (Previously presented) The nucleic acid molecule of claim 3, wherein said molecule comprises the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.